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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Sixty-seventh session
(3-7 October 2016)

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Note

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I. Introduction

A. Opening of the session

1. The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme held its sixty-seventh plenary session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, from 3-7 October 2016. It was opened by the Chairperson, H.E. Ambassador Carsten Staur (Denmark).

B. Representation

2. The following members of the Committee were represented at the session:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Holy See, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Zambia.

3. The Governments of the following States were present as observers:

Albania, Angola, Bahamas, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Monaco, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Panama, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe.

4. United Nations non-Member States present as observers were as follows:

State of Palestine.

5. The European Union was represented as an observer.

6. Also present were the following intergovernmental organizations and other entities:

African Development Bank, African Union, Council of Europe, Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Economic Community of West African States, International Development Law Organization, League of Arab States,

International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Sovereign Order of Malta.

7. The United Nations system was represented as follows:

Food and Agriculture Organization, International Labour Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human rights, United Nations Children Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Office at Geneva, World Bank Group, World Health Organization and World Meteorological Organization.

8. Some 33 non-governmental organizations were in attendance.

C. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

9. The Executive Committee adopted by consensus the following agenda (A/AC.96/LXVII/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Statement by the High Commissioner and general debate.
4. Consideration of reports on the work of the Standing Committee:
   (a) International protection;
   (b) Programme budgets, management, financial control and administrative oversight.
5. Consideration of reports relating to programme and administrative oversight and evaluation.
6. Consideration and adoption of the biennial programme budget 2016-2017 (*revised*).
7. Review of the annual consultations with non-governmental organizations.
8. Other statements
9. Meetings of the Standing Committee in 2017.
10. Consideration of the provisional agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.
11. Election of officers.
12. Any other business.
13. Adoption of the report of the sixty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.
14. Closing of the session.

D. Election of officers for the sixty-eighth session

10. Under Rule 10 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation, to serve the Committee from the day immediately following their election to the end of the last day of the following annual plenary session:

Chairperson:	H.E. Ambassador Ms. Rosemary MCCARNEY (Canada)
1st Vice-Chairperson:	[Deferred][1]
2nd Vice-Chairperson:	H.E. Ambassador Mr. Boudjemâa DELMI (Algeria)
Rapporteur:	Ms. Anh Thu DUONG (Switzerland)

II. Work of the sixty-seventh session

11. A summary of the general debate, delivered by the Chairperson, is contained in the annex.

12. The High Commissioner's statements delivered during the session and summary records of each meeting will be made available on UNHCR's website http://www.unhcr.org/excom.

III. Decisions of the Executive Committee

A. Conclusion of the Executive Committee on international cooperation from a protection and solutions perspective

13. *The Executive Committee*,

Noting the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016;

Considering that achieving international cooperation in solving international problems of a humanitarian character is among the purposes of the United Nations as defined in its Charter, and *considering* that the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees acknowledges that the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries, and that satisfactory solutions to a problem, of which the United Nations has recognized the international scope and nature, cannot therefore be achieved without international cooperation;

Reaffirming the importance of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees at the centre of the international legal framework for the protection of refugees, and recalling Article 2 of the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

[1] As discussions on the nomination of a second vice-chairperson from within the Asia group were ongoing, it was decided that as soon as a candidate had been selected, the name of the candidate would be circulated to the members of the Executive Committee for election by silent procedure.

Reaffirming its commitment to international solidarity and responsibility- and burden-sharing involving all members of the international community, and recalling the importance of international cooperation, in particular to support communities and countries hosting large refugee populations, in ensuring protection and assistance and achieving solutions for refugees;

Recalling also that international cooperation is important for States with internally displaced persons, stateless populations, as well as other people of concern to UNHCR;

Stressing the importance of the protection of human life and dignity as a priority issue by reaffirming, inter alia, the principle of non-refoulement, as well as the importance of providing assistance and seeking comprehensive approaches towards the implementation of durable solutions, as appropriate, from the outset of a displacement situation, while ensuring that no one is left behind;

Recognizing the multifaceted dimensions of solutions, bearing in mind the need to address the root causes of forced displacement, including in light of the importance of political will, as well as security implications for neighbouring countries hosting refugees, and finding practical and comprehensive approaches to resolving the plight of refugees and realizing durable solutions for them, consistent with international law, including international refugee law, and relevant General Assembly resolutions referring to the work of UNHCR;

Recalling also the guidance set out in its previous conclusions, in particular Conclusions No. 18 (XXXI) 1980, No. 40 (XXXVI) 1985, No. 52 (XXXIX) 1988, No. 56 (XL), No. 80 (XLVII) 1996, No. 67 (XLII) 1991, No. 100 (LV) 2004, No. 101 (LV) 2004, No. 104 (LVI) 2005, No. 105 (LVII) 2006, paragraph (i) (i), No. 107 (LVIII) 2007, paragraph (b) (xiii), No. 109 (LX) 2009, No. 111 (LXIV) 2013, and No. 91 (LII) 2001; and taking note of resolutions of United Nations General Assembly relating to the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

1. *Commits to* further strengthening of international cooperation and solidarity and equitable responsibility and burden sharing; and further urges all States and UNHCR to increase their efforts to implement these important principles, including through the provision of much needed support to host countries by mobilizing financial and other necessary resources, and ensure protection and assistance and realize durable solutions for refugees and for other persons of concern, as appropriate, in order to enhance the coping ability and resilience of host communities, as well as provide assistance in a more predictable, timely, sustainable and equitable and transparent way;

2. *Recognizes* the need to assist States to conduct, consistent with legal frameworks, early and effective registration and documentation of refugees, taking into account the specificity of each situation;

3. *Acknowledges* the important contributions of asylum countries and countries hosting and providing protection to large numbers of refugees, in particular, developing countries with limited resources that continue to do so in protracted situations consistent with international law, including international refugee law, and established principles and standards;

4. *Notes* that well-functioning asylum systems and international protection systems as a whole depend on efficient and expeditious return in safety and dignity to countries of origin of persons found not to be in need of international protection, *recalls* the obligations of States to receive back their own nationals, and calls for strengthened international support and cooperation to this end;

5. *Encourages* States to channel flexible or unearmarked funds in a timely and predictable manner that will enable UNHCR to achieve its mandate on protection and solutions while responding to humanitarian situations;

6. *Recalls* the voluntary character of refugee repatriation and the right of refugees to return to their own countries, and recognizes in the context of voluntary repatriation, the importance of resolute efforts in the country of origin, including rehabilitation and development assistance to foster the voluntary, safe, and dignified return and sustainable reintegration of refugees, and to ensure the restoration of national protection;

7. *Recalls* that voluntary repatriation should not necessarily be conditioned on the accomplishment of political solutions in the country of origin, in order not to impede the exercise of the right of refugees to return to their own countries;

8. *Calls* upon States and all other relevant actors to commit themselves, in the spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to comprehensive, multilateral and multisectoral collaboration and action, in addressing the root causes of protracted refugee situations, in ensuring that people are not compelled to flee their countries of origin in the first place, to find safety elsewhere, and in resolving the protracted refugee situations which persist, in full respect for the rights of affected persons;

9. *Encourages* the international community to cooperate to mobilise adequate and sustained support to enable the sustainable reintegration of refugees following their voluntary return, in particular through strategies with the enhanced involvement of development actors working in cooperation with UNHCR and other humanitarian actors and concerned States, and with appropriate links between humanitarian and development activities;

10. *Welcomes and encourages* further expansion and strategic use of resettlement as an important instrument of protection and of responsibility- and burden-sharing at a global level, in particular from countries hosting large refugee populations, including through the engagement of a wider range of resettlement countries and other stakeholders, notably civil society including refugee sponsoring organizations;

11. *Calls* for States to consider creating, expanding or facilitating access to complementary and sustainable pathways to protection and solutions for refugees, in cooperation with relevant partners, including the private sector, where appropriate, including through humanitarian admission or transfer, family reunification, skilled migration, labour mobility schemes, scholarships, and education mobility schemes;

12. *Encourages*, with a view to protecting refugees and other persons of concern and achieving solutions, supporting host communities and strengthening linkages among stakeholders and between humanitarian and development action,

through comprehensive, multi-year, multi-partner strategies, planning and programming, supported by predictable financial assistance;

13. *Notes* the significant gap between the needs of refugees and the available resources, encourages support from a broader range of donors and measures to make humanitarian financing more flexible and predictable, welcomes the increasing engagement of the World Bank and multilateral development banks and improvements in access to concessional development financing for affected communities, and encourages mobilization of private sector investment in support of refugee communities and host countries;

14. *Encourages* the taking of measures to extend the finance lending schemes that exist for developing countries to middle-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees, bearing in mind the economic and social costs to those countries;

15. *Notes* the benefits of consultation and participation of persons of concern in planning and programming by UNHCR, which affects such persons, and to which such persons can contribute;

16. *Recalls* progress made towards addressing statelessness in recent years, including through accession to statelessness conventions and measures at regional and national levels, and the value of international cooperation to prevent and reduce statelessness and find solutions for stateless people, including through UNHCR's Global Campaign to End Statelessness, and encourages continued efforts in this regard;

17. *Requests* UNHCR to report regularly on the implementation of this Conclusion within existing reporting mechanisms.

B. Conclusion of the Executive Committee on youth

14. *The Executive Committee*,

Noting the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016,

Considering that youth are an increasingly large proportion of populations of concern to UNHCR,

Reaffirming the importance of mainstreaming age and gender sensitive approaches for youth of concern to UNHCR,

Noting that this conclusion applies to youth of concern to UNHCR, including refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and returnees, as well as internally displaced people on the basis of specific requests from the Secretary-General and with the consent of the concerned State; and that UNHCR engages in activities in support of youth of its concern and in host communities, as appropriate,

Noting that refugee, internally displaced and stateless youth have particular vulnerabilities and are often negatively affected, and can be at heightened risk due to their situation,

Acknowledging the value of enabling participation of youth, where possible, in humanitarian assistance and other decision-making processes relevant to them and their communities,

Acknowledging that young people, in many circumstances, have the capacity to make considerable contributions to their communities; noting the Global Refugee Youth Consultations conducted by UNHCR in partnership with a number of States, the Women's Refugee Commission, and civil society in 2015 and 2016, and the consultations undertaken by UNHCR on stateless children and youth in 2015,

Taking note of relevant international legal instruments relating to the protection of children as applicable to youth, and recalling the guidance provided in past Executive Committee Conclusions of relevance to youth, including, in particular, Conclusion No. 98 (LIV) 2003; No. 99 (LV) 2004; No. 100 (LV) 2004; No. 101 (LVI) 2005; No. 102 (LVI) 2005; No. 105 (LVII) 2006; No. 107 (LVIII) 2008; and No. 108 (LIX) 2008,

1. *Takes note* of the contributions of youth through participatory approaches to protection and assistance programmes for themselves and their communities, noting that they are often overlooked in humanitarian situations as a group with specific needs based on their stage of life and development, and who have the potential to make important contributions;

2. *Encourages* UNHCR, States and relevant stakeholders to pursue ongoing engagement, consultation and activities with the active participation of youth of concern to UNHCR, including the Global Refugee Youth Consultations, as appropriate;

3. *Encourages* UNHCR, States and relevant stakeholders to proactively identify ways to engage youth in protection and assistance programmes, in youth strategies and action plans as appropriate, including through their meaningful participation and representation in their community management and decision-making processes;

4. *Encourages* systematic collection and use of reliable age and sex disaggregated data on youth of concern to UNHCR, while respecting their privacy and the principle of confidentiality, to ensure that their specific and diverse needs can be more effectively met;

5. *Calls* upon the international community to provide the necessary support and resources for UNHCR, concerned States and partners, to meet the specific and diverse needs and build the capacities of youth of concern to UNHCR;

6. *Acknowledges* that UNHCR programmes are undertaken in accordance with its mandate and international refugee law, and calls on UNHCR, Member States and relevant actors, as appropriate, and with the consent of concerned States, and in accordance with their national law, to:

(a) *Increase* support for and participation of youth of concern to UNHCR in programmes that foster leadership, including those that enable them to develop partnerships and networks at all levels;

(b) *Address* the needs and facilitate the contribution and participation of adolescent girls and young women as partners among UNHCR's youth of concern, with the active involvement of young men and adolescent boys;

(c) *Support* the active participation and contributions of youth of concern to UNHCR, including in partnership with national youth structures, where available in hosting and receiving states, in planning, programming and achievement of solutions which benefit them;

7. *Commits* to strengthening the engagement and participation of youth of concern to UNHCR, including through education and training and life skills building and livelihood opportunities, with the consent and in accordance with the laws of host States, and in ways which contribute to the support of host communities through strengthened international cooperation and responsibility- and burden-sharing, and encourages the international community to mobilize the necessary financial and other resources;

8. *Highlights* the urgent need to take further measures to prevent childhood statelessness and engage with and find solutions for stateless youth, including as reflected in UNHCR's Global Campaign to End Statelessness and the 2015 "I am here, I belong" report, and encourages the continuation of efforts to promote adherence to the Conventions on Statelessness, where applicable, and the taking of measures at the global, regional and national level.

C. General decision on administrative, financial and programme matters

15. *The Executive Committee*,

1. *Recalls* that the Executive Committee, at its sixty-sixth session, approved an original budget for 2016 covering total requirements of $6,546,288,297; *notes* the reduction in the annual programme budget for the Africa region of $38,362,902; *notes* that the additional needs under supplementary budgets in 2015 amount to $676,775,192; *approves* the total revised requirements for 2016 amounting to $7,184,700,587; and *authorizes* the High Commissioner, within these total appropriations, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

2. *Confirms* that the activities proposed in the biennial programme budget for the years 2016-2017 (revised), as set out in document A/AC.96/1158, are consistent with the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner (A/RES/428 (V)); the High Commissioner's other functions as recognized, promoted or requested by the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General; and the relevant provisions of the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees (A/AC.96/503/Rev.10);

3. *Approves* the programmes and budgets for regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters under the proposed 2016-2017 biennial budget (revised), as set out in document A/AC.96/1158 and amounting to $7,309,704,332 for 2017, including the United Nations regular budget contribution towards headquarters costs, the reserves, and the Junior Professional Officer programme; and *authorizes* the High Commissioner, within this total appropriation, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

4. *Determines* the revised ceiling of the working capital and guarantee fund at $100,000,000 effective 1 January 2017, pursuant to article 6.5 of the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees (A/AC.96/503/Rev.10); and *authorizes* the High Commissioner to gradually transfer resources to reach the revised ceiling; and *requests* the High Commissioner to review periodically the adequacy of the level of the working capital and guarantee fund;

5. *Takes note* of the financial statements for the year 2015 as contained in the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the financial report and audited financial statements of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2015 (A/AC.96/1157) and the Report by the High Commissioner on key issues and measures taken in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors (A/AC.96/1157/Add.1), as well as the Report by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on UNHCR's biennial programme budget for 2016-2017 (A/AC.96/1158/Add.1) and various reports of the High Commissioner related to oversight activities (A/AC.96/1159 and A/AC.96/1160); and *requests* to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these various oversight documents;

6. *Requests* the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs indicated under the biennial programme budget (revised) for the years 2016-2017, and *authorizes* him, in the case of additional emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the operational reserve, to create supplementary budgets and issue special appeals under all pillars, with such adjustments being reported to the subsequent Standing Committee meeting for consideration;

7. *Acknowledges* with appreciation the burden that continues to be shouldered by developing and least developed countries hosting refugees; and *urges* Member States to recognize this valuable contribution to the protection of refugees and to participate in efforts to promote durable solutions; and

8. *Urges* Member States, in light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, and in parallel with the long-standing and substantial support provided by refugee-hosting countries, to respond generously and in a spirit of solidarity to his appeal for resources to meet in full the 2016-2017 biennial programme budget (revised) and to ensure that the Office is resourced in a timely and predictable manner, while keeping earmarking to a minimum level.

D. Decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2017

16. *The Executive Committee*,

Having reviewed the issues before it at its sixty-seventh session, and bearing in mind the decisions adopted at that session,

1. *Decides* to convene three formal meetings of the Standing Committee in 2017, to be held in March, June and September;

2. *Reaffirms* its decision on the framework for the Standing Committee's programme of work (A/AC.96/1003, paragraph 25, subparagraph 2 (c)); authorizes the Standing Committee to add and delete items, if appropriate, to this framework for its meetings in 2017; and requests member States to meet in December 2016 to prepare a detailed work plan for formal adoption by the Standing Committee at its first meeting in 2017;

3. *Calls* upon its members to continue efforts to ensure that debate at the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee is of a substantive and interactive nature, yielding practical guidance and clear advice to the High Commissioner, in keeping with the Committee's statutory functions;

4. *Calls* upon the Office of the High Commissioner to be explicit and analytical in its reports and presentations to the Committee and to submit documentation in a timely manner; and

5. *Further* requests the Standing Committee to report on its work to the sixty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.

E. Decision on observer participation in meetings of the Standing Committee in 2016-2017

17. *The Executive Committee*,

1. *Approves* applications by the following Government observer delegations for participation in meetings of the Standing Committee from October 2016 to October 2017:

Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Jamaica, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Panama, Paraguay and Zimbabwe.

2. *Authorizes* the Standing Committee to decide upon any additional applications from Government observer delegations to participate in its meetings during the aforementioned period;

3. *Approves* the following list of intergovernmental and international organizations to be invited by the High Commissioner to participate as observers in relevant meetings of its Standing Committee from October 2016 to October 2017:

United Nations specialized agencies, departments, funds and programmes; African Union; Council of Europe; East African Community; Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf; Economic Community of Central African States; Economic Community of West African States; European Union; Executive Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Independent States; Intergovernmental Authority on Development; International Centre for Migration Policy Development; International Committee of the Red Cross; International Development Law Organization, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; International Organization for Migration; League of Arab States; Organization of Eastern Caribbean States; International Organisation of La Francophonie; Organization of Islamic Cooperation; the

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; Southern African Development Community; and Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

F. Decision on the provisional agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the Executive Committee

18. *The Executive Committee*,

Recalling its decision on working methods adopted at its fifty-fifth plenary session (A/AC.96/1003, paragraph 25),

Decides to adopt as the provisional agenda for the sixty-eighth session of the Executive Committee the standard model contained in subparagraph 1 (f) of the above-mentioned decision.

G. Decision on the simultaneous distribution of documents of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

19. *The Executive Committee*,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 69/324 on multilingualism, which underlines the responsibility of the United Nations to integrate multilingualism into its activities, as well as General Assembly resolution 70/9 on the pattern of conferences, which emphasizes multilingualism as a core value of the Organization and calls for the strict respect of the rules concerning the simultaneous distribution of General Assembly documents in all six official languages,

Reaffirming the importance of multilingualism as a means of promoting international understanding and respect, peace and security, and cooperation among nations,

1. *Notes* that the following documents prepared for the annual sessions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme cannot, for procedural reasons, be submitted to the United Nations Documents Management Service within the stipulated timeframes to allow for the simultaneous distribution in all official six languages: (i) Key issues and measures taken in response to the report of the Board of Auditors; (ii) UNHCR's biennial programme budget and its revision; (iii) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; (iv) Report of the September meeting of the Standing Committee; and (v) Report on the work of the Standing Committee;

2. *Recalls* that the official and working languages of the Committee are English and French, and *agrees* to consider these documents and their draft decisions on the basis of the equally authentic English and French originals submitted by the substantive secretariat;

3. *Acknowledges* that the requirement of simultaneous distribution of these five documents in the six official United Nations languages may be exceptionally lifted for the annual sessions of the Executive Committee;

4. *Acknowledges* further the need to make available these documents in all six official United Nations languages as early as possible.

H. Decision on the participation of intergovernmental organizations in private meetings

20. *The Executive Committee*,

Recalling its Rules of Procedure (A/AC.96/187/Rev.7),

1. *Decides* to amend Rule 38 to read as follows:[2]

"The Committee shall draw up a list of intergovernmental organizations other than specialized agencies, with which the Secretary-General of the United Nations has established a working relationship, to be invited by the High Commissioner to send an observer to its public meetings.

The Committee, upon a recommendation from the Standing Committee[3], may decide on an annual basis to invite intergovernmental organizations that hold observer status in the Committee to participate in its private meetings on asylum and refugee matters within their competence."

2. *Invites* the Standing Committee to consider any requests from intergovernmental organizations to participate in private meetings.

[2] The Standing Committee is a subsidiary body of the Executive Committee.

[3] This revision to the Executive Committee's Rules of Procedure will be reflected in A/AC.96/187/Rev.8.

Annex

Chairperson's summary of the general debate

The Chairperson summarized the general debate of the sixty-seventh session of the Executive Committee as follows:

"Addressing the Executive Committee on Monday morning, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, recalled that during his 10 years in office the number of displaced people had more than doubled. He urged States to transcend their national interests and come together in a forceful global response. He reminded us that the real crisis was not one of numbers, but of solidarity, and welcomed the significant commitments that had been made by States in the New York Declaration adopted in September. The High Commissioner for Refugees, in his opening remarks, stressed the urgency of adopting new approaches, noting that displacement is one of the great challenges of our time. He was honoured that UNHCR had been requested to lead the development of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, a process in which the Executive Committee will play a central role. He also outlined the five core directions for the Office in the coming years. One hundred and thirty-five delegations took to the floor, sharing your insights, commitments and concerns.

Emergencies and funding

Delegations recalled the rapid succession of large-scale emergencies, which continued to cause profound human suffering and test the capacity of the international community. The crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and its impact on neighbouring host countries and those further afield was at the forefront of our discussions, but you urged us not to overlook other complex situations, including in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia, Ukraine, and Yemen, as well as in the Northern Triangle of Central America. Delegations expressed concern about gaps in humanitarian funding for many of these situations, particularly in Africa, and encouraged the provision of unearmarked support to UNHCR, as committed to in the 'Grand Bargain'. More generally, there were calls to address the root causes of displacement through prevention and preparedness; and we were encouraged to move from 'meeting needs' to 'ending needs', including by involving affected persons in conflict resolution.

Protection issues

Several delegations noted that access to, and the quality of, protection was increasingly problematic in some regions, against a backdrop of national security concerns and rising xenophobia. We were urged to avoid 'the globalization of indifference', and you called for States to uphold their international protection obligations, sharing — not shirking from — their responsibilities. Many delegations reaffirmed their commitment to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as well as to regional instruments and initiatives, such as the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action. You noted efforts to establish and revise national asylum systems, bringing them in line with international standards. You also welcomed the progress made by the Executive Committee in adopting two conclusions on international protection

this year — on international cooperation from a protection and solutions perspective, and on youth — and noted the importance of this process in providing guidance to UNHCR. You underlined initiatives to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and to address the needs of refugee children and those with disabilities. The theme of this year's High Commissioner's Dialogue, 'Children on the move', was recognized as timely.

Mixed movements, addressing and resolving statelessness

A number of States referred to the complex issues involved in addressing mixed movements and highlighted efforts to combat trafficking and smuggling. It was recognized that while migrants and refugees are distinct categories — with refugees unable to return home because of conflict or persecution, and holding a particular legal status as a result — in practice the two groups are often affected by many of the same factors. You have welcomed the High Commissioner's decision to deepen engagement with the International Organization for Migration and other partners to address these challenges. The adverse impact of natural disasters and climate change in driving displacement was also raised. Many States had made advances in addressing and resolving statelessness, in line with UNHCR's #ibelong campaign, including through accessions to the two statelessness conventions, amendments to nationality laws, and regional initiatives such as the Abidjan Declaration on the Eradication of Statelessness. The Human Rights Council resolution on 'The right to a nationality: women's equality nationality rights in law and in practice', adopted in June, was also a positive step.

Solutions

With some delegations characterizing protracted displacement as 'the new normal', the need to reinvigorate efforts to find durable solutions was a recurring theme of our debate. We were urged to support comprehensive, multi-year solutions strategies, in particular for refugees from Afghanistan and Somalia, and to adopt solutions-oriented approaches from the outset of a crisis. The Solutions Alliance was characterized as a useful framework for global collaboration in this respect. Some delegations highlighted progress with respect to voluntary repatriation, including through tripartite agreements with UNHCR, and called for the involvement of development actors in countries of origin to ensure that return is sustainable. We heard the emphasis you placed on the need for repatriation to be truly voluntary, and on continuing to provide protection to those who are unable to return. Several delegations noted efforts to expand the number of resettlement places and provide other forms of admission, emphasizing that such programmes should be substantive and not merely symbolic. Progress and challenges in relation to local integration were also outlined by a number of States, and you strongly encouraged development actors and the private sector to support these efforts.

Assisting host countries — including by harnessing development assistance

The continuing generosity of countries and communities hosting large numbers of refugees in the face of socioeconomic, environmental and security challenges was applauded by almost all delegations who took the floor. Several host States drew attention to important initiatives to transition from a 'support' paradigm to one of 'resilience', by providing refugees with access to education, national

health services, and the labour market, as well as exploring alternatives to camps and assisting refugees in urban areas. At the same time, many speakers emphasized the need to increase support to host communities. As the High Commissioner noted, host States deliver a 'global public good', and there is an international obligation to help them shoulder this responsibility. There was consensus on the important role of development actors in this regard. UNHCR's strengthened partnership with the World Bank was welcomed, as was the World Bank's commitment to assisting middle-income host countries. Similarly, the pledge to 'leave no one behind' as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was cited as an important tool to lift both displaced people and their host communities out of poverty.

A blueprint for change — going beyond 'business as usual'

If there was one key message permeating our discussions, it was that 'business as usual' was no longer sufficient to address contemporary displacement challenges — 'unprecedented' crises require 'unprecedented' responses. The outcomes of the various high-level events held in 2016, indeed, provide a powerful platform for change. You expressed particular support for the New York Declaration, which reaffirmed that the management of large movements of refugees and migrants is a shared responsibility, and urged the Office to prioritize the development of a global compact for refugees in a transparent and consultative manner. One delegation cautioned that the global compact should promote progress, and not open loopholes for conceptual setbacks in terms of refugee protection. More generally, you urged States to expedite their efforts to translate these political commitments into practice. 'Actions speak louder than words', and it will be necessary for world leaders to 'make good' on their promises including through the provision of adequate funding if the declaration is to make a real difference in the lives of refugees. Many of you also welcomed the concrete commitments made by States in terms of funding, resettlement/humanitarian admission places, and access to education and livelihoods, at the Leader's Summit convened by President Obama of the United States of America in September 2016.

UNHCR

The Executive Committee reaffirmed its support for UNHCR's protection mandate and paid tribute to UNHCR staff working on the frontlines of the global response to displacement. The five core directions for the Office identified by the High Commissioner were welcomed: ensuring the centrality of protection, seeking and leveraging solutions, strengthening emergency preparedness and response, engaging development actors, and working across the entire spectrum of displacement. You particularly underlined UNHCR's commitment to bolstering the collective response for internally displaced persons. You also encouraged the Office to continue to partner with government institutions and other stakeholders to prevent a duplication of efforts. UNHCR was urged to develop an implementation strategy for its commitments as part of the 'Grand Bargain', adopted during the World Humanitarian Summit.

Conclusion

There has been a strong reaffirmation of the principle of international solidarity as the cornerstone of the refugee protection regime. There is also an urgent need to ensure proximity to conflict is no longer the basis for allocation of responsibility. As the High Commissioner reminded us yesterday, almost all countries in the world have themselves experienced displacement at some point in their past. It is incumbent on us to bear this in mind, as we work together to respond to today's emergencies with compassion and generosity. Displacement has moved to the centre of the international agenda for the first time in many decades. Significant political courage is needed. It is time to deliver a more comprehensive, predictable and longer-term response for displaced people and their host communities."

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